



**MONO-PEDIA VOL. II**



# MONOpedia

A collection of beautiful yet slightly peculiar words and phrases, that are commonly used at MONO.

Through their compendious descriptions, we invite you to delve deeper into Latin America's culinary history.

When I was asked to write the introduction to the newest version of Monopedia, I was a bit concerned. A "pedia" of any kind implies a fairly comprehensive collection of knowledge about a particular subject. How much history and knowledge can there be about a restaurant that is only three years old?

Fortunately, I had the original Monopedia to consult, and then I had a good, long talk with Mono's Venezuelan-born, Italian passport-holding chef, Ricardo Chaneton. And I realised that the history of Mono is far more than just three years. Mono's history goes way back to long before Ricardo was born. It encompasses the chef's childhood in Venezuela, his multi-national ancestry (which includes Venezuelan, Argentinean, Italian and Colombian grandparents), the food he ate growing up, which helped train his palate, and all the chefs and culinary teachers who helped him refine his cooking skills. It involves the food and history of Venezuela and also many other countries in South America. It includes all the creative contributions of everyone who works at Mono, who have helped to shape the restaurant into what it is today.

When I realised that, I was grateful that I was writing only the introduction, and not Monopedia itself. Because with all that collective history, it wasn't a matter of trying to make Monopedia into something bigger than it seemed initially, but about making the difficult decisions about how much of that immense body of knowledge they would have to leave out.

My first visit to Mono was within weeks of its opening in December, 2019, and I've eaten there many times since then. I've watched the cuisine change from the original contemporary French to a menu that explores the vast culinary influences of South America - Venezuela, in particular. The crudo on the first menu has given way to ceviche, while monkbread - a literal fusion of monkfish and veal sweetbreads - is now the simpler but no-less-delicious monkfish with Venezuelan bollito and sofrito sauce. I remember with excitement the first time Ricardo served us corn arepas and tacos, and when he started making his own true bean-to-bar chocolate.

Ricardo's cuisine has changed so much in just three years. I wait with excitement to see - and taste - what the next three years will bring.

*Susan Jung*

Vogue Hong Kong food columnist  
and author of *Kung Pao and Beyond -  
Fried Chicken Recipes from East and Southeast Asia*  
(Quadrille, April 2023)

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# FRUITS

# AGUACATE

[AGWA-KATE] *noun.*



With a history that dates back over 10,000 years, the Aguacate - or Avocado, as it is called in English – finds its origins in Mexico and along the Andean mountain range.

A Latin American staple, the fruits themselves are green or yellow with a single large pit and buttery flesh. Aguacates were consumed by ancient indigenous tribes the Aztecs and the Mayans who revered the fruit for its many benefits including its reputation as an aphrodisiac, an aid for childbirth, reducing inflammation, and indigestion. Known in Argentina, Chile, Perú and Uruguay as Palta, avocados are commonly eaten ripe and fresh though cooked versions can also be found. More often than not they are used as a main ingredient of Guacamole and Guasacaca, sauce like condiments popular in Mexican and Venezuelan cuisine respectively. Cooked versions of the avocado, such as grilled, can be found within Tacos and Arepas.

## BANANA PASSIONFRUIT

*noun.*



Also known as Parcha in Venezuela, Curuba in Colombia and Tumbo in Peru. The banana passionfruit hails from the Andes region. The first ceviche in Peru was made with this fruit, not lime. At MONO, its juice is incorporated into the leche de tigre.

# CACAHUETE

[KA-KA-WETE] *noun.*



Known to Latin Americans as Cacahuetes, Peanuts have been part of the continent's agricultural and culinary repertoire since Pre-Hispanic times. With origins from Peru, other points of cultivation have also been found along the Andes mountain range in countries like Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Brazil. Though most of the Cacahuetes' history is left to the imagination this legume crop was mainly grown for its edible seeds and, much like throughout the rest of the world, is eaten as a snack raw, roasted, toasted, steamed, salted, or spiced up and combined with other ingredients. Today the humble peanut finds itself uses in a variety of South American cuisines and dishes ranging in flavour from salty, to spicy, to sweet. In Mexico they can be commonly as a snack or grounded and used as a thickener for Mole or other sauces, soups, and stews.

# CACAO

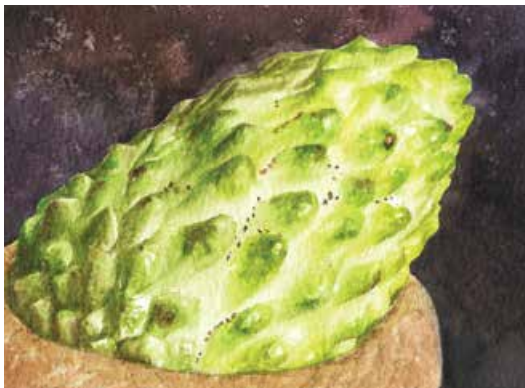
[KAH-COW] *noun.*



A cornerstone in Latin America's culinary heritage, cacao is consumed in various forms across the region - in celebratory mole sauces that grace momentous occasions; in atol de súchil, a beverage native to Samayac in Guatemala, which features toasted cacao. At MONO, Ricardo pays homage to this revered ingredient by making chocolate from scratch using raw Ecuadoran cacao pods.

## CHERIMOYA

[CHER-UH-MOI-UH] *noun.*



Once called nature's masterpiece, the Cherimoya is an exotic edible fruit that grows native to the higher altitudes of Ecuador and Peru. Known colloquially around the world as the Custard-apple, the fruit features a soft creamy white pulp, dotted with medium sized black seeds, and encased in a green scaly skin. While different varieties can express a range of taste, texture, and shape - the Cherimoya's flavour is often likened to a mixture of pineapple, papaya, peach, and strawberry. Popularly eaten throughout Latin America ripe at room temperature or chilled, several other preparations of the Cherimoya are more common in countries such as Chile and Peru where it is used in the creation of ice cream, yogurts, juices, drinks, and jams. The Cherimoya's cultural relevance in the South American continent can be found in the art of the Moche, an ancient indigenous civilisation that thrived in Peru. The Moche were deeply revering of agriculture, believing it to be the basis of their success as a collective, and used ceramic art to celebrate several fruits and vegetables – one of which was the Cherimoya.

## FRUTILLA

[FRU-TI-YA] *noun.*



A type of flowering plant from the rose family, Frutillas or strawberries as they are called in English, have been growing throughout South America for many centuries. Famed for their bright red berries, frutillas have a distinct tart-sweet flavour and are prepared in many different ways; you will often find them eaten fresh as is, or in sauces, syrups, or desserts. Blessed with a climatic diversity that allows countries like Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Venezuela to harvest year round, the continent is responsible for producing nearly a quarter of the worlds' strawberry consumption. In Mexico they are typically had in a dish called *Fresas con Crema* which, as the English translation suggests, pairs strawberries with its most popular sour cream. Like most dark coloured berries, strawberries have significant health benefits and are rich in antioxidants.



# GUANABANA

[GWAH-NAH-BAH-NAH] *noun.*



Similar to Chirimoya, Guanabana is the fruit of a broadleaf evergreen tree native to the tropical regions of the Americas and the Caribbean. Also known as Soursop, the fruit is quite large in size and features an array of small spikes on its green skin. Inside the pulp is white and dotted with black inedible seeds featuring a cocktail of flavours reminiscent of apple, strawberry, and a hint of citrus. Most popular in places like Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia, Guanabana is habitually eaten fresh and ripe but can also be used to make smoothies, beverages, candies, sorbets, and flavourings. Much like the Guava, its leaves are also steeped into an infusion and consumed as a medicinal tea.

# GUAYABA

[GWA-JABA] *noun.*



With a presence northern Latin America that dates back to about 2500 BCE, the Guayaba is native to Mexico, Peru, and the Caribbean. Known in English as Guava, the fruit itself comes in a number of varieties that express themselves in a range of colours from yellow-green to pink. From skin to seed, the entire Guayaba is edible and, when it is not eaten raw or paired with any seasonings, can be used in an assortment of recipes throughout the continent. Examples of these are as juice, within the popular Latin American drink Agua Fresca, fruit punches, in culinary sauces, ales, candies, dried snacks, desserts, and even fermented into alcohol for Pulque de Guayaba. Besides the fruit, the leaves are considered a folk medicine and are often drank in an infusion to help those with heart diseases.

# PAPAYA

[PUH-PAI-UH] *noun.*



Bearing fruit all year round, the Papaya is native to Mesoamerica and is said to have been growing wild in the jungles of Central America long before the Spanish arrived in the area. Also known as Papaws, or Pawpaws, Papayas are completely edible from skin to seed though people often only consume the soft flesh of the fruit. It is commonly used in a variety of different ways depending on the stage of ripeness; ripe versions of the fruit are consumed fresh, seasoned, combined with other fruit, and even cooked into a myriad of sweet or savoury dishes. In Brazil and Paraguay unripe papayas are instrumental in the creation of sweets and preserves like jam.

# PIÑA

[PI-NYAH] *noun.*



One of the world's most iconic tropical fruits, the Piña – or Pineapple as it is known in English, has been cultivated in South America for centuries. Finding its origins between southern Brazil and Paraguay, little is documented in terms of the spread of this diverse ingredient throughout the Latin American continent. Pineapples have a distinctive set of leaves, a spiky and rough exterior that encases a firm and sweet yellow flesh that can be used in wide variety of ways; eaten raw or cooked in a number of sweet and savoury dishes, it is also known to be fermented into vinegar, or featured in beverages like the classic Caribbean cocktail Piña Colada or Tepache.

# PITAHAYA

[PI-TAHY-AH] *noun.*



Nicknamed after its fantastical appearance, the Pitahaya or Dragon Fruit is a cactus fruit that grows native to the Mexican desert. Possessing a characteristically leathery - though leafy- pink or yellow skin, it usually contains white or red flesh dotted with small edible black seeds. It is mostly eaten raw and as is, though more commonly by the rest of the world than within Latin America, while the flowers can be eaten or steeped for tea.

# TUNA

[TOO-NUH] *noun.*



Not to be confused with the saltwater fish, Tuna is the Spanish nickname for the sweet fruit of the Nopal cactus. Native to the dry climate of the Mexican desert, the prickly pear – as it is known in English- grows out of the pads of the Nopal and are characteristically found to come in a range of shapes and sizes. The fruit is often classified by first its taste; Tuna referring to the sweet variety and Xoconostle the sour.

Tuna specifically come in three main colours; red (Tunas rojas), green (Tunas verdes), and yellow (Tunas amarillas). As a cactus fruit, the prickly pear features a number of small spiny bristles on its outer skin and must be carefully prepared before consuming. The pulp can be scooped out and eaten as is or used to make a multitude of other dishes such as salads, breads, desserts, beverages, syrups, or jellies while the seeds can be strained and ground into meal.

# DISHES

## AGUACHILE

[AH-GUA-TSCHI-LEH] *noun.*



Typically served cold, Aguachile is a version of ceviche from the Mexican Caribbean featuring leche de tigre infused with chili peppers.



# AJIACO

[AJI-A-CO] *noun.*



Known throughout Latin America as a Colombian national dish, Ajiaco is yet another example of the culinary meeting point of indigenous and Spanish culture within the continent. Most easily described as a type of chicken and potato soup, traditional recipes call for the inclusion of three specific types of potatoes - Sabanera, Criolla, Pastusa- and is always seasoned with a common herb called guascas, better known in English as the potato weed. The dish is finished off with corn on the cob and served with a dollop of heavy cream, capers, and avocado. Variations of this recipe can be found in countries like Peru and Cuba.

## ANTICUCHO

[AN-TEE-KU-TSCHO] *noun.*



Originally from Peru, Antichuco is a meat dish of grilled skewers and ox heart. A mix of spices with cumin and chilies are added to marinate the meat and make it a popular meat dish throughout Latin America.

At MONO, our monkfish is dry-aged and grilled ‘anticucho-style’.

# AREPA

*noun.*



Traditionally made from ground maize, arepa originates from the northern region of South America. It is offered as a friendly gesture to guests in Venezuela and Colombia.

At MONO, our arepas are filled with seasonal fillings. Fillings include avocado lobster salad or slow-cooked beef.

# BARBACOA

[BAAR-BUH-KOW-UH] *noun.*



Originating from the Caribbean Taíno people, Barbacoa is essentially a style of cooking identical to barbeque. The most traditional expression of this is technique is the slow cooking of whole meats over an open flame, more specifically within a fire pit and covered in the maguey or agave leaves, however over the years it has come to include techniques that steam the meat until tender. This style of cooking is incredibly popular in the Mexican regions of South America and has even been adopted by the United States in areas where the two cultures overlap to create the famed Texmex cuisine.

## BOCADILLO

[BOKA-DIYO] *noun.*



Considered a confectionary delicacy throughout Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela where it is eaten in abundance; Bocadillo is a type of sweet jelly traditionally made of guava. Similar in appearance and texture to the Spanish Dulce de Membrillo, Bocadillo is prepared in a similar fashion to a jam or preserve and then left to harden into a firm consistency much like that of a rice cake. The sweet treat can be had on its own but is sometimes eaten on bread with a thin slice of cheese. Brazillian Goiabada, Venezuelan Conserva de Guayaba, and Colombian Bocadillo Veleño are notable versions of this specialty.

## CASABE

[KAH-SAH-BEH] *noun.*



Usually described as a type of ancestral bread, Casabe is made from the Yuca or Cassava root that grows native to the Amazonas regions of Latin America. Originating from the cuisine of indigenous tribes that live within these regions, the bread itself is made by grating the Yuca into a mulch that is then loaded into a Sebucan – a type of pressure strainer made of woven palm leaves- to extract most of the liquid from the pulp, once only slightly moist the pulp is spread onto a Comal and cooked into its typical round form. The texture of Casabe can vary from particularly hard and crunchy like crackers, or softer like flatbreads and is commonly eaten alone or alongside soup, stews and various sauces.

## CAUSA

[COW-SA] *noun.*



Causa is a cold Peruvian starter of seasoned mashed potato terrine. At MONO, Chef Ricardo integrates rocoto chili and kalamata olives, an ingredient commonly used in South America despite being from Greece, into the mixture.

# CEVICHE

[SEH-VEE-CHE] *noun.*



Whilst there are a few different interpretations of Ceviche's history; one suggesting it was birthed within the Moche culture and another saying it was brought over by the Moor-influenced Andalusian women who accompanied the conquistadors, it seems to be the consensus that this dish found its popularity within coastal civilisations that thrived in areas that make up modern day Peru, Ecuador, and Chile. Typically made with a raw seafood, Ceviche employs a seasoned curing liquid known as a *Leche de Tigre* – or Tiger's milk. This marinade is commonly citrus based though the Inca Empire was also known to use *Parcha* or *Banana Passionfruit* as well. Given the raw nature of the protein, Ceviche is typically had fresh and is often accompanied by sweet potatoes, maize, avocado, or plantains.



# CHIMICHURRI

[CHEE-ME-CHU-RI] *noun.*



Chimichurri is a rustic sauce from Argentina made mainly of chopped herbs, olive oil and red wine vinegar. It is usually served with grilled beef. MONO follows a recipe from chef Ricardo's grandfather, but blended down to a refined purée.

## CORVINA

[COR-VEE-NAH] *noun.*



A fish from Spain, also known as Meagre. Served with crispy skin, which is usually Caribbean-style deep-fried.

At MONO we serve it with aji Amarillo (yellow chili) infused mashed potatoes, chayote, and topped with hot Leche de Tigre.

## DULCE DE LECHE

[DUL-SEH-DEH-LEH-CHE] *noun.*



With a name that, when translated, means "sweet (made) of milk" Dulce de Leche is a type of caramel made by reducing milk and sugar together – traditionally in copper pots to reduce sticking. Though its true origin and history remain mostly a mystery, Dulce de leche is made and consumed through all of the Latin American continent; most typically served as a filling for Argentine Alfajores, a dipping sauce for Churros, a jam for toast, and various other dessert type dishes. Many version of this delicacy can be found all over the world such as the French Confiture de Lait and the Turkish Kajmak.

# EMPANADA

[EM-PUH-NAA-DUH] *noun.*



Named after the Spanish verb *Empanar* – meaning ‘to (wrap in) bread’, Empanadas are a filled pastry similar to a turnover that is either baked or deep fried. Empanadas have many variations, ranging from savoury to sweet, depending on region and are considered a delicacy in the cuisines of countries such as Argentina, Belize, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Venezuela, Mexico, Ecuador, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. Savoury versions are customarily filled with a combination of meat, cheese, potatoes, tomatoes, and corn. Sweet versions are also quite popular and tend to be filled with cheese, a vanilla or milk custard, and are typically rolled in sugar. One notable variety are the Ecuadorian Empanadas de Platano which use a plantain dough instead of corn or wheat.

## HALLACA

[AH-YAH-KAH] *noun.*



Hallaca is a typical Venezuelan dish traditionally served on Christmas and New Year's Eve. During the Spanish colonial era, the Spanish brought with them grapes, wine, capers and olives and the servants at that time took their masters' scraps and mixed it with their own ingredients e.g. banana leaf, corn flour, bananas, and it became a tradition. Hallaca is a *mélange* of these cultures, similar to a tamale but made out of corn flour and stuffed with a meat filling, raisins, capers and olives, then wrapped in a smoked banana leaf, tied and boiled.

A nod to the coming of Hispanic culture to South America, MONO's signature pigeon leg is stuffed with a filling of capers, olive, annatto seed and sweet chilis from Venezuela, wrapped with banana leaves which are steamed and then grilled over charcoal to impart a smoky flavour.

## INFLADITA

[IN-FLA-DI-TA] *noun.*



Typically enjoyed as a Mexican street food snack, an Infladita is a puffed corn tortilla with a stuffing. Topped with mate bearnaise, MONO's infladita crisp sheath shatters to reveal a savoury monkfish brandade.

## KARI GOSSE

[KAH-REE GOSS] *noun.*



Kari Gosse is a curry mix concocted by a pharmacist in Brittany way back in the 17th century. Typically paired with lobster and seafood, the spice blend takes its name from the creole word for curry “Kari” and “Gosse”, the creator’s last name. At MONO, Ricardo pays homage to the Breton tradition by infuses kari gosse into a sauce made with lobster heads.

## LECHE DE TIGRE

[LEH-CHEH DEH TEE-GREH] *noun.*



Leche de tigre, or tiger's milk, is the term for the citrus-based marinade used to cure seafood in a Peruvian ceviche.



## MASA MADRE

[MA-SAH MA-DREH] *noun.*



The Masa madre is the Latin American counterpart to a sourdough starter. Mono's masa madre is over 600 days old! Our homemade sourdough is made in-house with black, white and red quinoa.

# MOLE

[MO-LEH] *noun.*



Mole means “grind” in Spanish. It is a traditional marinade and sauce originally used in Mexican cuisine. Mole is a cultural statement and the proportion and combination of spices tend to differ greatly between families, grandmothers and regions in Mexico, the underlying commonality is that the preparation is very time consuming. It is a celebratory sauce – whether it’s used to reward good behaviour from children, celebrate the life of a person who has passed, and some say even to spark courage in the hearts of the timid and bring great comfort to wary souls.

The mole at MONO is made from over 20 ingredients: Pequillo Pepper, Eggplant, Red Bell pepper, Ñora Pepper Paste, 70 % Carupano Dark Chocolate from Venezuela, Lime, Active Charcoal Powder, Almonds, Hazelnuts, Cane Sugar, Cocoa Nibs, Smoked Paprika, Cinnamon, Clove, Star Anis, Coriander, Kimchi Chili, Sarawak Pepper, Mirasol Chili, Ancho Chili, Panca Chili.

The mortar (typically made of a volcanic material) is heated up with a butane torch to mimic the heat generated from the friction of the grinding motion. The heat cooks the ingredients as the pestle grinds the sauce, each round revealing a richer complex sauce, perfectly balanced to create a symphony of flavour.

Paired with foie gras, an iconic French ingredient, the dish best represents Chef Ricardo’s origins and journey.

## MOLLEJAS

[MO-YE-HAS] *noun.*



Known in English as Sweetbreads, Mollejas refer to either the thymus gland or pancreas of beef or lamb. Named after its sweetness of flavour and tenderness of texture, this organ carries less of a musk on the palette and is incredibly popular in many Latin American cuisines. In Mexico they are often breaded and fried for tacos, while countries like Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay tend to grill them in the traditional Asado style.

## MONO'S SOURDOUGH

*noun.*



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MONO's signature homemade sourdough (masa fermentada), is 100% made in-house. Our masa Madre is over 600 days old. This traditional method is the Latin American counterpart to a sourdough starter. Our version is made in-house with black, white and red quinoa, with a thin crispy outside layer, and a spongy core, and mild (not sour) taste.

Our bread is always served hot, to remind you of Latin American warm hospitality and to hug you like a warm welcome.

## MOQUECA

[MO-KEH-KAH] *noun.*



Moqueca is a Brazilian seafood stew with a base of dende oil and coconut milk. Usually cooked with fish, lobster, shrimp, or any combination of those three ingredients. Traditionally stewed with vegetables in clay pots.

At MONO, we make our version with lobster and only use coconut milk and we serve it as a sauce in our Lobster Moqueca.

## MORCILLA

[MOR-SI-YA] *noun.*



Morcilla is a type of Spanish blood sausage. MONO's rice morcilla incorporates a black rice and basmati rice filler, using calamari head in place of a regular sausage casing as a playful nod to "mar y tierra" (Spanish for surf and turf).

## PIPIAN VERDE

[PEE-PEE-ANNE VER-DEH] *noun.*



A typical Mexican sauce (can be compared with a green mole) made from pumpkin seeds, fresh tomatillo, and poblano peppers.

At MONO you can taste our pipian verde served with our grilled monkfish and thinly sliced oca.

# SOFRITO

[SOH-FREE-TOH] *noun.*



Meaning ‘to lightly fry’ in English, Sofrito is the collection of aromatics, herbs, and vegetables used to create a flavour base throughout Latin America. Much like the French Mirepoix, Italian Soffritto, or the Cajun ‘Holy Trinity’, Sofrito provides the foundation off of which many dishes in the continent are built. Each country or region has their own style of this mixture though they all typically include onions, garlic, tomatoes, and peppers that are fried in oil. The term Sofrito is adopted from European Spanish but goes by various other names in Latin America such as Brazilian Refogado, Colombian Hogao, Ecuadorian Refrito, and Dominican Sazón to name a few.



# TACO

[TAA-KOW] *noun.*



Whilst the finer details of its origins are largely speculated, the Taco is a traditional food found in Mexican cuisine said to predate the Spanish arrival in Mesoamerica. Tacos are essentially a folded tortilla, traditional versions opting for corn instead of wheat or nopal, filled with a variation of components such as beef, pork, chicken, seafood, beans, vegetables, and cheese. They are also often finished with various condiments and garnishes such as salsa, guacamole, lettuce, onion, tomatoes, and chilies. A number of varieties of this dish exists depending on the filling, some of the more famous one being Tacos al Pastor (shepard style), Tacos de Lengua (beef tongue tacos), and Tacos de Asador (grill tacos).

# TAMAL

[TUH-MAAL] *noun.*



A member of the extensive family of corncake typically prepared and consumed all over Latin America, Tamales or Tamal are a traditional Mexican dish made with a masa or corn dough. It can be prepared sweet or savoury and is often filled with various meats, beans, fruits, vegetables, herbs, sauces, and or cheese. After filling, it is wrapped in either the cornhusk or a banana leaf and steamed. It is known throughout the continent to have been the first dish made from corn in Mesoamerica and thus it is this region that is accredited with its origin. Dominican Guanimos, Nicaraguan Nacatamal, Trinidadian and Tobagonian Pastelles, Venezuelan Hallacas, and Andean Humitas are examples of other versions of Tamales.

# TETELA

[TE-TE-LA] *noun.*



Native to the Mixteca region of the State of Oaxaca and Puebla, Tetelas are popular Mexican snack often described as being similar to a triangular Empanada. They typically feature a filling of meat, beans, or cheese, are wrapped in a raw tortilla, and fried on a Comal. The outer shell can come in various colours depending on the type of corn used to create the tortilla, such as white, yellow, blue, or purple. It is often served alongside Crema Fresca – a type of soured cream- and a spicy salsa.

# TIRADITO

[TI-RA-DI-TO] *noun.*



Traditional to Peru, the Tiradito is a full expression of Japanese influence on Peruvian cuisine. Similar to a ceviche, this dish features a raw fish or seafood that is cut in a style very similar to sashimi and unlike Ceviche is served raw, rather than cured, with a spicy dressing – often a citrus based marinade known as Leche de Tigre, or tiger’s milk. The name itself holds some special meaning; it comes from the Spanish verb Tirar which when loosely translated means to throw or toss and it is called this because of the laissez-faire way that it often plated.

# TORTILLA

[TOR-TEE-UH] *noun.*



Meaning ‘small cake’ in English, Tortillas are a thin and circular flatbread originally made of corn. Famously originating from the Mexican regions of Latin America, they were said to have been invented by the Aztecs who were responsible for the domestication of the Maize crop and used it for a number of cornerstone food items for the Mesoamerican Cuisine. Ancient preparations were laborious, involving the soaking of corn kernels in a mixture of lime and water to remove their individual skins, and then grinding the remainder into a dough which was then divided and pressed flat before cooking on a Comal. Throughout history the tortilla have expanded from being made only of corn to the innovation of the wheat tortilla, upon its introduction to the Americas, and the Nopaltilla – a version that includes the pads of the prickly pear cactus known in the area as Nopal. The tortilla itself can be consumed in a number of ways; eaten as is, or used for tacos, burritos, and fajitas.

## VUELVE A LA VIDA

[VWELL-VEY-AH-LAH-VEE-DAH] *noun.*



Finding its origins in the coastal parts of Venezuela and the Caribbean, Vuelve a la Vida is best described as a type of seafood cocktail. Meaning ‘come back to life’ the dish is a known hangover cure, as well as a suggested aphrodisiac because of the use of a wide range of shellfish such as shrimp, mussels, clams, squid, and scallops. Similar to a Ceviche, the shellfish is paired with a Leche de Tigre (Tiger’s milk) that is customarily a combination of things like lemon, orange, tomatoes, cilantro, onion, sweet peppers, and then seasoned with salt and pepper. Similar versions of this are found throughout Latin America, the most notable of which is a Mexican dish of the same name.

# VEGETABLES & HERBS

# CALABACÍN

[KAH-LAH-BAH-SIN] *noun.*



One of the three staple crops of cultivation that blossomed out of Mesoamerica, the Calabacín is a type of marrow or gourd said to originate from modern day Mexico. The fruit itself is entirely edible throughout its lifespan, though mature versions tend to feature a tougher outer rind that may require peeling, and often come in a few different colours – deep green, yellow, orange, and striped. Also known by the name Zucchini or Courgette, the domestication of this vining fruit is believed to predate that of corn and beans in the Latin American continent. With such an important role in the cuisines of a number of different countries, it is no surprise that the Calabacin can be prepared in a number of ways from sweet to savoury such as raw in salads, stuffed and cooked, as well as combined into breads or cakes. Its most common culinary usage however is in soups and stews like Mole de Olla or Caldo de Pollo.



# CAMOTE

[KUH-MOH-TEH] *noun.*



Better known in English as the sweet potato, Camote are a root vegetable native to the region of Central and South America that make up modern day Mexico and Venezuela. Though there is little to illustrate in detail the history of the camote, we do know that this unassuming tuber has been rooting its way into the cuisine and culture of Latin America for over 5000 years. The Camote typically has a papery light brown skin that houses a rich orange flesh, much of the plant itself is edible and can be used in a variety of ways. The tuber is always cooked and can be combined into both sweet and savoury dishes such as in a traditional firm jelly from the lower regions of the continent called Dulce de Batata and in Peruvian Ceviche; while it's shoots and leaves are often treated as greens and eaten as well. Beyond its culinary usage the Sweet Potato has been featured in ceramics made during the height of Moche culture, and it's juice is often mixed with lime juice to create a range of dyes for textiles.

# CHAYOTE

[CHAH-YO-TEH] *noun.*



Chayote is a gourd native to Mesoamerica, though now found growing in tropical and subtropical regions all across the world. Chayotes are favoured for its versatility; every part of the plant - from fruit right down to the roots - can be used in cooking. At MONO, a thin slice of chayote appears together with Blue lobster and kari gosse, its delicate cucumber sweetness and firm crunch playing off the warmth of the spices.

# CILANTRO

[SEE-LAN-TROW] *noun.*



Whilst not native to the continent, Cilantro's inclusion in the cuisine of Latin America remains widely relevant. One of the oldest herbs in existence, it is documented that uses of the herb itself dates back over 8000 years - evidence of which was found in the excavation of the tomb of Ancient Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamun. Introduced to the Americas by Spanish conquistadors in 1500, Cilantro – or otherwise known as Corriander- is a member of the parsley family and is commonly used in lots of the cuisines of Latin America though it is specifically highlighted in Mexican cuisine as finishing garnishes for dishes like salsas, guacamole, and arroz con pollo. Besides the leaves of the plant, the stems, root, and seeds are also used; each one expressing a different degree of the herb's flavour profile.

## CULANTRO

[KUH-LAN-TROW] *noun.*



Cultivated throughout the world, Culantro is considered to be native to Latin America and features heavily in the cuisines of Mexico and the Caribbean. Also known as Mexican Coriander, Culantro is often used as an alternative to its botanical cousin Cilantro. Though differing in shape and size, they share a similar aroma and flavour – Culantro often described as the stronger of the two – that leads them to be typically used in seasonings, marinades, and garnishes. Besides a variety of culinary applications, Culantro is known to have an array of medicinal qualities such as anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antibacterial, and anticonvulsant.

## FLOR DE CALABAZA

[FLOOR-DEH-KAH-LA-BASS-AH] *noun.*



Known in English as Squash Blossoms, Flor de Calabaza bloom out of the creeping vines of the Summer Squash – better known as Zucchini. These flowers, like the plant they bloom from, is native to Mexico and features quite extensively in the gastronomy of this region. They can be had raw or cooked, popular preparations include as a filling for quesadillas, stuffed, fried, or added to soups and stews such as Caldo de Res.

## FLOR DE JAMAICA

[FLOOR-DEH-JUH-MAY-KUH] *noun.*



Native to sub-tropical and tropical regions, Flor de Jamaica – or Hibiscus as it is more commonly known throughout the world- is a type of edible flower popularly consumed in Mexico and the Caribbean. Considered a delicacy, the flowers are often dried and eaten as is or used to make jams, beverages, as a garnish, or in syrups and sauces. Typical preparations for Hibiscus include Agua Fresca, where the dried leaves are steeped in water and served cold; or Sorrel a traditional Caribbean Christmas drink of spiced hibiscus tea.

## HUACATAY

[WAH-KAH-TAY] *noun.*



Known by many names throughout the world, Huacatay is an aromatic herb that grows wild along the Peruvian portion of the Andes mountain range where it is native. Typically found in sauces, condiments, and infusions of Peruvian, Chilean, Bolivian, and Ecuadorian cuisines - this herb is extremely fragrant and boasts a flavour similar to a combination of sweet basil, tarragon, and mint. During the height of the Inca civilization Peruvian Black Mint was even considered a herbal remedy in folk-medicine for upset stomachs and some parasites. Today Huacatay can also be found in many herbal beauty products.

# JICAMA

[HE-CAMA] *noun.*



Jicama is a root vegetable from South America. It is nutritious, high in fiber and antioxidants. The root's exterior is yellow and papery, while its inside is creamy white with a crisp texture that resembles raw potato or pear. Can be eaten raw or steamed.



# MAIZ

[MA-IS] *noun.*



Better recognised throughout the world as Corn or Maize, Maiz is one of the three staple crops that formed the foundation of agriculture in Latin America. Said to originate from southern Mexico, Maiz is known to have been first cultivated within the Mesoamerican region before its spread to the rest of the continent. Most successfully domesticated by the Maya and Olmec, they were among the first civilizations to breed several species of the crop, as well as process it through cooking, grinding, and nixtamalization. The crop provided much abundance for these indigenous peoples and was deeply respected - even given a focal point within the Olmec language, culture, and religion.

To this day maize dominates in the cuisine of Latin America where it is commonly eaten in both sweet and savoury dishes; raw, cooked, fermented, or ground into flour and made into a type of dough called Masa - the latter of which stands as a backbone for hundreds of recipes throughout South America. Some examples include in Mexican corn Tortillas, Elotes, Tamales; Venezuelan Arepas, Cachapas, Bollitos, or Hallaquitas; and even El Salvadorian Pupusas. In terms of appearance, Maiz is typically found wrapped in a papery husk and several threads of corn-silk, the individual ears are no bigger than a standard ruler, and can come in a range of different colours from white to purple depending on variety.

# MASHUA

[MAH-SHOO-AH] *noun.*



Mashua is a regional root vegetable that originates from the Andes Mountains. In its raw state, it can often be compared to watercress in flavour, with light spiciness and herbal taste.

At MONO, it is served raw in a shellfish tartare, with razor clams and Hokkaido scallop.

# ÑAME

[NYAH-MEH] *noun.*



Native to Asia, Africa, and the Americas, the Ñame is a root vegetable popular in Caribbean countries like Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Known in English as a Yam, this tuber is often confused for a sweet potato though the two are not related at all. The Ñame customarily has a deep brown, almost bark-like, outer skin that encases a dense white or pale yellow flesh that boasts a flavour range from earthy to nutty. It can be prepared in a few different ways such as roasted, fried, steamed, or boiled, and is customarily had during festivals and special occasions.

# NOPAL

[NO-PAHL] *noun.*



Nopal, also known as prickly pear cactus, is commonly used in Mexican cuisine and eaten throughout Latin America. tart and lightly bitter, young Nopal pads are a versatile ingredient. Typically enjoyed grilled and sauteed, Nopal can also be steamed to retain its slimy texture.

## OCA

[O-KAH] *noun.*



Oca are the edible tubers of *Oxalis tuberosa*. Originated from The Andes area in South America, this root vegetable has a starchy, crunchy texture, similar to an apple. At MONO, oca is served with our carabinero, a tribute to South American's vibrant range of ingredients.

# TAMARILLO

[TA-MA-REE-YO] *noun.*



Originated from South America, tamarillos come in red, gold, and amber hues. The taste and texture reminds of a sweet tomato, with a sharp tang, a citrus essence, and bitter undertone and the essence of guava.

# TOMATE

[TOH-MAH-TEH] *noun.*



The Tomate's beginnings find it growing wild along the Andes mountain range, in the area of South America that make up Peru and Ecuador. The ancestor of the present day tomato, the Tomate was said to have been first cultivated by the Aztecs who domesticated and bred several varieties of the fruit ranging in size, shape and colour. With the Aztec's husbandry of this particular crop fruit, the heavy inclusion of the tomato in both the ancient and modern cuisine comes as no surprise - historical records revealing Tomatoes were used as base for a myriad of different sauces.

# TOMATILLO

[TOH-MA-TEE-YO] *noun.*



Native to Mexico and Central America where it has been cultivated long before the arrival of the Spanish, the Tomatillo is a flowering plant that produces fruit of the same name. Though appearing to resemble a small green to purple tomato, these fruits are actually more closely related to gooseberries and contribute an incredible tartness and colour to various dishes in the Latin American cuisine. These husk tomatoes can be used like regular tomatoes - eaten raw, in salads, or cooked into soups. Because of the Tomatillo's high pectin content they are also often made into jams and chutneys, though its most notable starring role is in the Mexican condiment Salsa Verde.



# YUCA

[YU-CAH] *noun.*



Yuca, also known as manioc in English, is a native root vegetable from South America. It is very starchy, tastes mildly sweet with a hint of sourness.

## NUTS & SEEDS

# AMARANTO

[AH-MAH-RAN-TOW] *noun.*



A relative of Quinoa, Amaranto or Amaranth as it is better known in English is a type of flowering plant that grows native to Mesoamerica. Growing over six feet in height, the Amaranth plant distinguishes itself from the landscape with its striking red seed head that can range from maroon to crimson. The crop is said to have been initially cultivated and consumed, in similar quantities to maize, by the Aztecs who populated the regions of its origin. Deeply integrated into the daily lives of the Aztec civilisation, it was used in a number of ceremonial drinks, foods, and religious rituals. Today the Amaranth is celebrated worldwide for its many health benefits, but is also commonly used to make a sweet delicacy called Alegria – Spanish for joy – in which the grains are toasted and mixed with honey, molasses, or chocolate.

# CAJUIL

[KAH-HUIL] *noun.*



Better known in English as the Cashew, this nut grows native to the area of Latin America where Brazil and Venezuela meet; spreading to the rest of the world through Portuguese trade routes that introduced it to India and Southeast Asia. The Cajuil grows on a tropical evergreen tree, typically out of the bottom of a small fruit called the cashew apple. The entirety of the Cajuil and its fruit are edible, the nut often consumed as a snack or added to a myriad of sweet and savoury recipes. If no eaten as is, the Cashew Apple can be made into a sweet drink, chutney, jam, cheese, or even fermented and distilled into liquor.

# CHIA

[CHEE-UH] *noun.*



Famed worldwide for their incredible health benefits that have garnered them the title of a 'superfood', Chia alludes to the edible seeds of the *Silva Hispanica* flowering plant that grows native to the regions of Latin America that make up southern Mexico and Guatemala. Known to have been first cultivated by the Aztecs, it was considered one of the four pillars of the ancient indigenous civilisation's staple crops alongside maize, beans, and amaranth. The seeds themselves are characteristically small, commonly measuring only two millimetres in length, and are beautifully speckled in brown, grey, black, or white. They boast a unique hydrophilic nature and can absorb up to 12 times their weight in liquids, creating a gel like membrane similar to gelatine. Serving many culinary uses they can often be found combined into or topping smoothies, cereals, granolas, yogurts, tortillas, or even within vegan and allergen-free baking where it is ground into a meal used as a substitute for eggs.

# FRIJOLES

[FREE-HOH-LEZ] *noun.*



One of Latin Americas most principal crops, Frijoles -or Habichuelas as they are known in some parts of the continent- is the Spanish name for beans. Originating in Mesoamerica, Frijoles belong to the legume family and have been cultivated within the continent for over 7000 years. Frijoles themselves come in an extensive range of varieties, colours, and sizes; some of which are the frijol Pinto (Pinto bean), frijol Azufrado (sulfur bean), frijol Mayocoba (heirloom bean), frijol negro (black bean), frijol Peruano (Peruvian bean), Flor de Mayo (flower of May bean), and Flor de Junio (flower of June bean). Deeply embedded in the cuisines of the Southern American continent, frijoles can be prepared both savoury - such as in Mexican frijoles refritos (refried beans), Puerto Rican Habichuelas Guisadas (stewed beans), Brazillian Feijoada (black bean stew), and Colombian frijoles Antiqueños - or sweet like in the Dominican delicacy Habichuelas con Dulce (sweet bean stew) which features a combination of different types of milks, sweet potatoes, and warm spices like cinnamon and nutmeg.

# QUINOA

[KEE-NUA] *noun.*



Quinoa is an Andean Pseudo cereal that is high in protein and considered a superfood. MONO's signature sourdough showcases all three types of quinoa (white, black and red) sourced from Peru.

## BEVERAGES



# AGUARDIENTE

[AH-GWAR-DYEN-TE] *noun.*



Aguardientes are a high proof beverage made from the fermentation, and later distillation, of fruit, tubers, sweet canes, grain, and even some species of bamboo. Originating from the Iberian peninsula, the concept and techniques used to make Aguardientes emigrated with the Spanish and Portuguese to the Latin American continent. A combination of necessity, the native ingredients, and the natural innovation and evolution of technique have over the years birthed a number of variations of Aguardientes coming from all over Latin America. Some notable versions from countries like Brazil where it is known as Chachaça; Chile where it is produced like Italian Grappa; and Mexico where it is also known as Habanero.

The name Aguardiente itself is a combination of the Iberian words for water and fire, *agua* and *ardiente* respectively, making its most basic English translation the very fitting 'Firewater' as these spirits are known to contain anywhere from 29-60% alcohol.

# CHICHA

[CHEE-CHA] *noun.*



Reaching out from the Andes and Amazonian regions, Chicha refers to both a fermented and non-fermented Latin American beverage. The fermented version is a type of corn beer made from a type of maize called Jora which is malted and native to the Andes mountain range. The production of this type of Chicha is similar to that of malted barley beer. Traditionally the process of making Chicha begins with the mastication or chewing of corn, then this mulch is left to ferment before boiling, and finally storing for further fermentation in large clay vats called Chombas. This variety is specifically called Chicha de Muko. Historically, and even in certain parts today, Chicha was predominantly made by 'Chosen Women' dedicated to Inca culture. It is deeply connected to the faith, spirituality, tradition, and rites of passage of this indigenous people as corn was considered a divine gift to humanity. To the Inca its consumption was representative of forming communion between them and ancestors. The recipe used to make Chicha is often very reflective of where it is made, additives such as quinoa and various other ingredients have birthed variations of this drink out of Amazonia, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and lastly Venezuela.

The non-alcoholic version of this drink is known as Chicha Mroada and is not fermented. Named after its vibrant colour, morada being the Spanish word for purple, this version of chicha is found mostly in Bolivian and Peruvian cultures, and is made by boiling purple maize with pineapple rind, cinnamon, and cloves.

## MATE; MATE COCIDO

[MAH-TEH; MAH-TEH CO-SEE-DO] *noun.*



Mate is a very popular South American tea, especially in Argentina. It is best enjoyed when shared between loved ones, usually from a bowl with the same metal straw. Ricardo's Argentinian grandfather washes down each meal with piping hot mate to aid digestion. At MONO, Mate Cocido is served after the main course, its bitter yet refreshing flavours helping to ease stomachs and stimulate appetites to prepare guests for desserts.

Cocido means "cooked" in Spanish, in this case, mate cocido means the tea is filtered resulting in a lighter taste that appeals more to the palates of local Hongkongers.

## MEZCAL

[MES-KAL] *noun.*



Yet another adaptation of Pulque, Mezcal is a Mexican distilled spirit also made from the fermented sap of Agave cacti. Unlike its Jaliscan counterpart Tequila, which is strictly made from Blue Agave, Mezcal can be made from a combination of over 30 variations and subspecies of the Agave cactus. The production of Mezcal, again similar to Tequila, remains quite artisanal with makers working in small-scale and relying on techniques and knowledge passed down from generation to generation. Through somewhat standardised, Mezcal itself can be highly varied depending on a multitude of factors such as: the species of agave used, the fruits and herbs added during fermentation, and the distillation processes employed. While it can be served as a cocktail, Mezcal is customarily enjoyed straight with a few slices of orange and a sprinkling of a typical worm salt called sal de gusano.

# PISCO

[PI-SKOW] *noun.*



Whilst the true origins of Pisco remain largely unknown and of dispute, Peru and Chile - where it is made- share this aguardiente as their national spirit. Emerging from the winemaking regions of these countries, Peruvian and Chilean pisco differ only slightly in production and are both sternly regulated within their own countries.

# POZOL

[PO-SOL] *noun.*



An ancient and indigenous drink made from fermented corn dough, Pozol is native to the southern states of Mexico - Tabasco and Chiapas. The base ingredient of the Pozol dough is maize. There are a few methods of preparation for Pozol, each one commonly requiring that a corn dough be made and left to ferment. It can be had sweetened or unsweetened and served with a variation of additional ingredients to flavour. Some popular ones include chili, pepper, salt, honey, sugar, and cacao. In some states of Mexico the fermentation process is extended and a type of sour Pozol is made. The drink itself has been around since Pre-Columbian times, with roots stemming from the Maya culture where it has been revered for its many uses to quench thirst, hunger, and even within medicine as a type of compress. It is because of this that various indigenous tribes continue to pack and take Pozol on long treks into the jungle, as well as use it within their religion as a part of their harvest rites.

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# RON

[RRON] *noun.*



Referring to Spanish-style rum, Ron is made from the fermentation and distillation of sugarcane juice and molasses. Originating from the Caribbean islands, this auburn liquor is richly engrained in the continent's history – consumed as a beverage, used as a form of currency to drive various enterprises, and even a notable companion to naval soldiers and pirates aboard their ships. Despite seeming almost identical to other versions of rum, Ron is specific to production regions that tend to be Spanish-speaking, meaning places such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, The Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama. Ron is characteristically lighter in body, smoother in flavour, and whilst it is popularly served in a cocktail, traditionalists will tell you the only way to drink Ron is with a splash of water or over ice.



# SINGANI

[SIN-GANI] *noun.*



Deeply engrained in the Bolivian nationalism, Singani is a type of distilled spirit produced only in the higher valleys of the country's terrain. The production of Singani dates back to the 16th century and began with the introduction of the white Alexandria grape variety by early Spanish settlers to the area. These grapes were chosen because of their intense aroma and their willingness to thrive in the high altitude vineyards that are signature to producing Singani with regulations requiring that they be at least 1600m above sea level. The spirit itself is used in a multitude of ways within modern society's cocktail culture, as well as traditionally enjoyed during weddings, religious holidays, festivals, and various other celebrations.

# SOTOL

[SO-TOL] *noun.*



Named after the desert dwelling plant it is derived from, Sotol is a type of distilled liquor often considered a cousin to Tequila and Mezcal. Native to Chihuahua, Sotol - or desert spoon, is a natural resource intricately interwoven into the history of Mexico's indigenous cultures. It is consumed as a food or used to make items such as sandals, baskets, ropes, mats; and before the introduction of distillation techniques Sotol was fermented into a beer. The desert spoon plant takes about 15 years to mature and can yield one bottle of the spirit. To produce Sotol, mature desert spoon plants are harvested and, similar to agave, the outer leaves are cut away to reveal the heart - or piña- of the plant. These hearts are then brought to the distillery to be cooked, shredded, fermented, and distilled.

Three types of Sotol are currently in production; Plata, meaning silver, - which refers to a type that is unaged and bottled right after distillation; Reposado, meaning rested, - this variation is customarily aged for a minimum of several months to a maximum of one year; Añejo, meaning aged, - these are typically aged for a minimum of one year.

# TEPACHE

[TE-PA-CHE] *noun.*



Sold along the streets of Mexico, where it is from, Tepache is a fermented beverage made with the discarded parts of pineapples. Street vendors and home cooks alike make Tepache by boiling pineapple rind and cores with spices like cinnamon and finally brown sugar – or piloncillo as it is more commonly known in Mexico. The mixture is then left to ferment for several days, usually in large barrels to speed up the fermentation. Though it undergoes a process of fermentation Tepache does not actually have enough alcohol in it to be considered an alcoholic drink and will often be topped off with beer for a more adult version. Served plain over ice, the fizzy nature of Tepache and the various microorganisms within it make it similar to a soft-drink or Kombucha. Tepache is traditionally served at any time of the day, in a clay mug or a clear plastic bag with a straw for travel ease.

# TEQUILA

[TE-KILA] *noun.*



One of two evolutions of Pulque, an alcoholic drink made from the fermented sap of the Agave cacti drank in Mesoamerica for thousands of years, Tequila is a type of distilled spirit named after the city in Mexico it hails from. Northwest of Guadalajara the rich red desert soil provides the perfect breeding ground for the Blue Agave cactus that Tequila is specifically made from. First produced in the 16th century, Tequila was actually born when Spanish conquistadors had run out of their own supply of brandy and, choosing not to go without, turned their attention towards a solution creating one of Mexico's first indigenous distilled spirits. The process of making tequila remains a practice deeply rooted in tradition, Blue Agave are still planted, raised, and harvested manually by Jimadores - men who have been initiated in the producing of Tequila.

Only produced in their five official Denominations of Origin (D.O.), Peruvian Pisco is made using copper similar to single malt whiskey. This variation is further categorised into four different types of pisco depending on what combination of grape they use in the production. Puro, or pure, are versions from a singular grape; Aromaticas, aromatic, are made from muscat, or muscat derived, grapes - this too being a single variety of grape; Mosto Verde, green must, is distilled from specifically partially fermented crushed grapes, otherwise known in winemaking as must; And finally Acholado which is made from distilling a blend of several grape varieties. Other regulations such as a minimum aging of three months and a ban on any additives is present in the Peruvian technique.

## EQUIPMENT

## BUDARE

[BU-DA-REH] *noun.*



The Budare is a staple in Latin American cooking, specifically in countries such as Venezuela and Colombia where Arepas are a dominant element of the cuisine. It is essentially a flat, round griddle with a simplistic handle, most often employed to make the corn discs that are Arepas. Keeping with tradition most matriarchs pass their budares down from one generation to another, favouring these pans over new ones that lack the wear it takes to cook best.

## COMAL

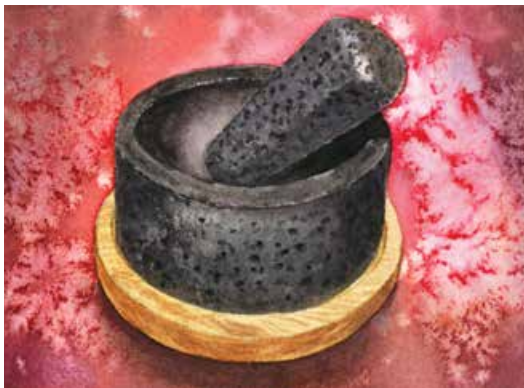
[CO-MAL] *noun.*



Similar to a Budare, the Comal is also a flat griddle. Commonly found throughout Central America, the Comal is traditionally made out of clay or cast iron. These pans are typically used to make tortillas, arepas, and are even used to toast cacao seeds. The traditional elements of this cookware is seen in the practice of handing down the Comal as a family heirloom, the belief being that having been tempered over so many years the Comal will perform better.

## MOLCAJETE

[MOL-KA-HET-TE] *noun.*



A traditional Mexican mortar and pestle, the Molcajete is often made of volcanic or basalt stone that is uniquely able to conduct heat. Much like its western counterpart, it is used in cooking to grind various foods and ingredients. Dating back to the Aztec and Mayan Mesoamerican cultures, the molcajete is traditionally carved and more often than not usually into a bowl with three short legs. The molcajete is usually further decorated with head carvings of animals – the most common of which resembles a pig. Keeping in theme with most indigenous kitchen tools, the molcajete performs at its best after seasoning. Brand new ones tend to flake, causing basalt grains to come away from the bowl until the surface is properly prepared.



# TORTILLERO

[TOR-TILL-ERO] *noun.*



An unmistakable feature of most Mexican meals, the Tortillero is a special holder for tortillas. Typically a basket with a small lid, the purpose of the holder is to keep the tortillas warm as you move through your meal. These Tortilleros are often a stunning show of craftsmanship, as they can come in a variety of materials and designs that relate to personal or regional style. Many versions are made from textiles, natural fibres, and ceramics.

# INSECTS

# CHAPULINES

[CHA-PU-LI-NES] *noun.*



Chapulines is the term specific to Mexico and Central America for deep fried grasshoppers eaten in certain parts of Mexico and Central America. The grasshoppers are harvested during their hatching period from late spring to early autumn and are typically prepared in a comal with garlic, lime juice, chilies, and salt. Chapulines are very popular in the regions of Oaxaca, Puebla, Cuernavaca, and Tepoztlán where they can be found at markets, stores, and even the snack bar of sporting events.

## SAL DE GUSANO

[SAL-DE-GU-SA-NO] *noun.*



A traditional spice to Oaxacan cuisine, Sal de Gusano is essentially a combination of sea salt, a mixture of chillies, and agave worms. The worms are harvested from the agave plants from July to September when they are abundant. After collection they are dried in the sun, roasted, and then crushed into a fine powder. Sal de Gusano is customarily used as a seasoning for various dishes or, most famously, to accompany Mezcal and orange slices.

## SIQUI SAPA / HORMIGA CULONA

[SI-KEE SAH-PAH / OR-MI-GA KU-LONA] *noun.*



Considered a delicacy, Siqui Sapa is a traditional Amazonian snack of large female leafcutter ants found in the market stalls of Peru and Colombia. Sold only at specific times of the year, these big bottomed ants – literal translation of their name- are a scarce commodity and can fetch a high price for a handful. The ants themselves are the ‘princesses’ of the leafcutter ants, these females are naturally tasked with reproduction and once they reach maturation they customarily separate from the colony and become queens of their own. The Siqui Sapa are typically prepared by first soaking in saltwater and then by roasting. Their flavour and texture profile is often described as crunchy and tasting similar to pork rinds with an earthy and bitter aftertaste.

# CHILLIES

## ANCHO CHILI

[AHN-CHO CHI-LIH] *noun.*



It's common in Mexico for dried chilis to take on a different name from its fresh counterparts. In this case the ancho chili is the dried version of the poblano pepper. As the saying goes, the smaller the pepper the hotter it is, so while the relatively large (ancho means “wide” in Spanish) ancho chili peppers are mild in heat, they are complex in flavor boasting earthy, sweet, and slightly fruity notes. Widely considered part of “the holy trinity” of dried Mexican peppers – the cornerstone of Mexican cuisine, and a crucial ingredient in mole sauces.

## AJI AMARILLO

[AHH-HEE AH-MA-REE-YO] *noun.*



Peru's quintessential pepper and a staple used across regional recipes, aji amarillo are sun-drenched golden-hued peppers ripe with tropical fruitiness and a hint of raisin, all while packing a sultry medium-heat. Incredibly difficult to find outside of Peru, but well worth the search.



## CHIPOTLE

[CHI-POT-LE] *noun.*



A dried version of one of Mexico's most famed chilies, the Japaleño. Chipotles are mature Jalapenos, that have been left to ripen on the vine, and generally have a mild to medium heat that scores 2500-8000 SHU on the Scoville scale. Once they are ripe, and bright red, they are collected and placed in a smoker to dry. There are two types of Chipotles, the Morita and the Meco. The distinct difference between the two is that the Morita is smoked for less time, is smaller in size, and darker in colour. The Meco on the other hand is lighter in colouring and tends to be smokier in flavour. These types of chilies are commonly found in dishes from all over the country and even some Mexican inspired dishes in the southern parts of the United States.

## ESPELETTE PEPPER

[ES-PEH-LETTE] *noun.*



French cuisine may be extremely multifaceted – exquisite, rustic and rich all come to mind – but dishes with any sort of heat are certainly not the usual suspects. The glowing exception are the dishes that spotlight the Espelette pepper. Also known as piment d’Espelette and Pimento Espelette, this chili has a delicious subtle heat, slightly smoky and slightly citrusy in flavours. It is so essential to the Basque region and its cuisine that it’s been given – like some wines and cheeses – protective AOC certification.

## GOCHUGARU

[GO-CHOO-GAH-ROO] *noun.*



Gochugaru is an essential Korean chili powder used in most Korean dishes. Vibrant red in color with a complex flavor that is a tad spicy, sweet, and slightly smoky, its actual spiciness can vary depending on its origin and specific farming conditions. Gochugaru is one of the 21 ingredients is added in MONO's signature mole.

## GUAJILLO

[GUA-HILL-YO] *noun.*



The second most commonly used dried chili in Mexico, the Guajillo is a chili pepper of mild to medium heat (rated 2,500-5,000 SHU on the Scoville scale) originating from the Zacatecas state. This chili has two main varieties, Guajillo and Guajillo Puya – the latter of which is the spicier of the two. Traditionally guajillo chilis are used in salsas, marinades, pastes, butters, and spice rubs though it's delicate flavour is favoured paired with fish or chicken.

## HABANERO

[HA-BAH-NER-OH] *noun.*



One of Latin America's spiciest chillies (rated 100,000-350,000 SHU on the Scoville scale), the Habanero originates from regions of the Amazon and is named after the Cuban capital Havana – though the ingredient rarely finds its way into the cuisine. The chili is actually much more dominant in the Yucatan region of Mexico where Habanero's are eaten regularly in hot sauces, salsas, and a number of spicy dishes. As they grow, the peppers start off green and colour in many shades as they ripen.

## MIRASOL CHILI

[ME-RAH-SOL CHI-LIH] *noun.*



The mirasol chili is widely used in the making traditional Mexican mole sauces. The name translates to “looking at the sun” in Spanish, referencing how the peppers grow upright on the plant. The peppers sometimes also go by *travieso chile* (“naughty pepper” or *chile trompa* (“elephant’s trunk”). The mirasol is full-bodied, distinct, and delicate in flavour, with hints of strawberry or other berries, and an incomparable rich chili pepper flavor with a milder heat ranging between 2,500 to 5,000 SHU.

You may also know mirasol peppers by their dried counterparts, the *guajillo* pepper, which is much more ubiquitous in Mexican cuisine. Mirasol Chili is one of the 21 ingredients is added in MONO’s signature mole.

# MURUPI

[MOO-ROO-PEE] *noun.*



Hailing from the Amazonian regions of Latin America, more specifically where Venezuela and Brazil meet, the Murupi is a rare and unique chilli that boasts a tremendous heat. Though little is known about the Murupi's history, it is commonly used in the cuisine of the indigenous tribes that live native to the parts of the rainforest where the ingredient grows and is typically used as a seasoning in the place of salt as these tribes exist without access to saltwater.

## ÑORA PEPPER

[NYO-RAH] *noun.*



A versatile ingredient found in Spanish cuisine, the ñora pepper is a red, round pepper of the “ball” variety. It is a little sweet with an intense aroma, but without being spicy (although there are two varieties- so watch out).



## PANCA CHILI

[PAN-CAH CHI-LIH] *noun.*



Originally from Peru, Panca Chili, also known as aji panca (or aji brown) is known for its smoky, berry-like fruitiness. It is incredibly mild and family friendly, making it perfect for soups and sauces and even a garnish on fruit and desserts.

## PIQUILLO PEPPER

[PIH-KEE-YOE PEPPER] *noun.*



The name is derived from the Spanish word for "little beak". Traditionally, piquillo peppers are grown in Northern Spain, harvested by hand and roasted over embers to bring out a rich and sweet flavour. The peppers are then peeled by hand and packed in jars or tins.

## ROCOTO CHILI

[RO-CO-TO CHI-LIH] *noun.*



The rocoto chili (also known as locoto pepper) is essential to Bolivian and Peruvian cuisines. While it may closely resemble a bell pepper in shape, its juiciness and meatiness are closer to a tomato, albeit one that is brimming with a surprising heat. At 30,000 to 100,000 SHU, the spiciness level of a rocoto chili can top out that of a habanero pepper.

## SERRANO

[SER-RANO] *noun.*



Named for the sierras or mountains of its native states Puebla and Hidalgo, the Serrano pepper is one of the most used chili peppers in Mexico. Though quite similar in look and flavour to fresh jalapeños, Serranos tend to be more voluptuous in flesh and more intense in terms of spice – holding a Scoville scale rating of 10,000-25,000 SHU. The peppers themselves come in a variety of colours but the most common is green.

## OTHERS

# ALFAJOR

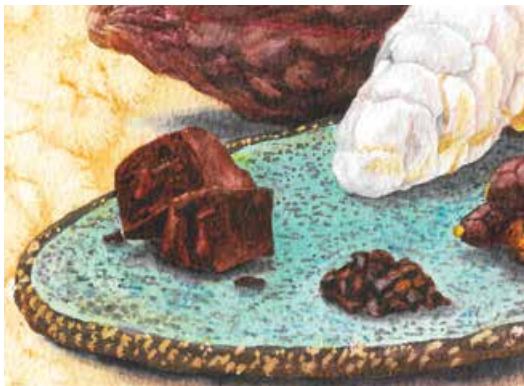
[AL-FAH-HOR] *noun.*



A traditional cookie confection popular in Peru, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile. Unlike its Spanish counterparts, the South American version features two round cookies pressed together with a sweet filling, typically dulce de leche. MONO's alfajores are made in the style of Argentinian alfajores which feature a more delicate crumbly texture.

# CHOCOLATE

[CHO-CO-LATE/CHO-CO-LA-TEH] *noun.*



Arguably one of the world's most favourite flavours, chocolate is a food item made of the seed of the Cacao fruit that grows native to Mesoamerica. Believed to have made its first appearance within the Olmec empire, then the later Maya and Aztec civilisations, chocolate began its rich history as a bitter beverage and was used in a number of ceremonial ways as well as in day-to-day life. Hot and cold versions of this were consumed; usually seasoned with a number of things such as honey, chili peppers, pimento, vanilla, and the leaves of a tree called Orejuela – or sacred earflower. The creation of chocolate is a laborious process and traditionally begins with a fermentation period that encourages the development of its flavour. After fermenting the seeds are customarily washed, dried, roasted, peeled, and then crushed into its most basic state: cacao nibs. Over time several usages and expressions of this incredibly diverse ingredient have been innovated and created; often ground to make pastes, powders for beverages and flavourings, or combined with cacao butter and sugar to create the solid forms that we know and love today. Chocolate can come in a variety of intensities depending on percentages of cacao (ranging from milk to dark), species of Cacao, and any other additional flavourings added during the chocolate making process. Though typically enjoyed sweet and in desserts, chocolate is also known to be used in some savoury dishes such as Mexican mole sauces and even as a seasoning or marinade for meats.

## EVA AGUILERA OLIVE OIL

*noun.*



Considered one of the finest olive oils in the world – the artisan Eva Aguilera extra-virgin olive oil from Catalunya. Only 900 liters are produced per year, using premium handpicked organic Arbequina olives harvested during the full moon in early November to ensure its purity and clean taste.



## PANELA/PILONCILLO

[PAH-NEL-AH / PI-LON-CILL-YO] *noun.*



A type of unrefined cane sugar used throughout Latin American cuisines, Panela is the result of boiling and reducing sugarcane juice. After boiling for many hours the liquid is poured into moulds and left to harden. It is actually from these moulds that it gets its Mexican moniker Piloncillo, which when translated from Spanish means ‘little loaves.’ An obvious ingredient for a number of sweet dishes across the continent, Panela is also notably used in cooking, canning, and winemaking as well. Much like other sugars, Panela comes in an array of textures; such as liquid, granulated, and solid, and also in lighter, Blanco, and darker, Obscuro, varieties.

# VANILLA

[VA-NILL-AH] *noun.*



Native to Meso and Central America, precious vanilla orchids once grew wild across the northern tip of Latin America. Said to have first been domesticated by the Totonac, the indigenous tribe of people who inhabited the eastern coast of modern day Mexico, and used within their cuisine and culture. Vanilla's most important role in history however arises from its introduction to the Aztecs who used the spice to flavour their food and beverage – more specifically the traditional drink made of cacao that inspired what we know as 'hot chocolate'. It is believed they combined it with cacao to soften some of the natural bitterness as sugarcane and various other sweeteners had not yet been discovered in these regions. Today vanilla is the second most expensive spice in the world after saffron and is produced in a number of countries such as Tahiti, Madagascar, and France.



